



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## **School Committee Minutes 11-27-2001**

*ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE*  
*REGULAR MEETING*  
*TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2001*  
*7:30 PM*

*Present:*     *Joani LaMachia, Chair*                     *Suzanne Owayda*  
              *David McKenna, Vice Chair*             *Paul Schlichtman*  
              *Denis Sullivan, Secretary*           *Martin Thrope*  
              *Barbara Goodman*

*Supt.*       *Kay Donovan*  
*CFO*        *David Kale*  
*Asst. Supt.* *Joanne Gurry*  
*Dir. Sp. Ed.* *Marilyn Bisbicos*

*Call To Order:*     7:35

Supt. Donovan read to the School Committee a letter she sent to Ottoson parents relative to the retirement of OMS principal Paul Lamoureux.

### **Focus Group/Ottoson Principal**

Gus Martinson, Human Resource Officer, facilitated the School Committee focus group. During the meeting school committee members listed the qualities an ideal candidate would possess. The process used in selecting candidates includes: creating a screening committee, conducting a paper screening of resumes, interviewing with the screening committee and Superintendent, and site visits. Mr. Martinson stated that the approximate timeline is three months and hopes to complete the process by March 1st. Mr. Thrope voiced the need to avoid any appearance of impropriety in the selection process.

Both Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Thrope acknowledged the need of support staff for Mr. Martinson.

### **Public Participation**

None

### **Secretary's Report**

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Thrope

Voted unanimously to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 11, 2001.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. McKenna

Voted unanimously to approve the School Committee goal workshop and the regular meeting minutes of October 23, 2001.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Schlichtman

Voted unanimously to approve the executive session minutes of September 25, 2001

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Thrope

Voted unanimously to approve and hold the executive session minutes of October 11, 2001.

On a motion Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. McKenna

Voted unanimously to approve the executive session minutes of October 23, 2001

### **Report on Budget Revenue Task Force**

Supt. Donovan, CFO David Kale, and committee member Dave McKenna attended the Budget Revenue Task Force Meeting on Monday, November 18th. Mrs. Donovan distributed and outlined the expected revenues, anticipated expenditures, the major possible negatives, and also the major possible positives that could impact the budget. At this point the finance committee is allocating \$800,000.00 to the schools for collective bargaining and step raises.

### **Peirce Field Update**

Supt. Donovan, along with Planning Director Alan McClennen and Town Counsel John Maher presented the School Committee with preliminary plans for the field house to be built on Pierce Field. The field house is expected to house a track, basketball and tennis courts and facilities for community events. Mrs. Donovan stated the cost of adding an ice skating rink was too expensive to consider. Remediation of Peirce Field is slated to begin in the spring of 2003; during remediation all Arlington High outside athletic events will be scheduled elsewhere.

The committee referred the plans to the Specialized Student Service Subcommittee for review. That meeting is scheduled for December 20th at 5:30PM.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Mr. Sullivan it was:

Voted to refer the plans (for the field house at AHS) to the Specialized Student Service Subcommittee and authorized Supt. Donovan with the full support of the Committee to seek funds from the Capital Planning Committee for the design of the field house plans. Roll Call: Unanimous

### **PTBC Update**

Mr. Thrope reported that at the Peirce School steel is going up and that the finances are very tight at that project. Mr. Thrope prepared a school capacity model (attached), which analyzed the school population, class size, and a number of options for the special education and BIP population. Mr. Thrope recommended that the Committee decide and remain firm on student capacity and total classrooms on the remaining schools. Mr. Schlichtman noted that where the zone line is placed between Thompson and Bishop schools and the extent of the walk to zone to the Thompson School heading west would establish a firm number (for planning purposes) of students that can walk to Thompson School but not to another school.

Ms. Goodman stated that the School Committee has an obligation to prioritize education values in terms of class size, in terms of our BIP Program and where we place our special education students, and how our educational policy relates to district lines.

Supt. Donovan stated that when deciding on the size of the schools, that district lines, mass planning numbers, NESDEC numbers, an assumption of 2400 total students and taking transportation costs out of the equation were all instrumental in making the final decision.

Referring to the school capacity model presented, Mrs. Donovan did not believe that there was any information that would alter the way that they were presented to Town Meeting. Mrs. Donovan stated that she would recommit to a 380 number for the Dallin School, that she would continue to plan for three classrooms of every grade at the Thompson School, and the remaining decision at the Stratton is whether to rebuild new or renovate.

In discussion regarding the remaining schools, the School Committee agreed to take the capacity model under advisement. In addition the Committee reaffirmed the seven schools based on total enrollment, number of classrooms, average class sizes and district lines (including the 380 total capacity for the Dallin School).

### **Superintendent's Report**

- .. **Scoreboard** is up and running and was used at the Thanksgiving Day football game.
- .. **Policy Timetable** a list of policies that must be voted annually
- .. **File Cabinets** have been emptied so that all members will have uniform materials available during meetings (i.e. policy manual, MGL 2001, Parliamentary Procedures, school handbooks, etc..).
- .. **DOE Review** the special education mid cycle review will take place on December 17th & 18th.
- .. **Public Forum** on the Kindergarten Entrance Age will take place on Monday, December 17th at the Hardy School from 7:00 to 9:00 PM

### **Community Relations Subcommittee**

Ms. Goodman reported that the public forum on the **U.S. Involvement in Afghanistan and Central Asia** was well attended. The speakers did a great job and the sense of community spirit was evident.

Mr. Thrope noted that the full committee never directed the subcommittee.

### **New Business**

#### **Field Trip Approval**

Supt. Donovan presented a letter from Ottoson principal Paul Lamoureux requesting approval for a ski trip to New Hampshire for students as part of the Ottoson Activity Day.

Mr. Thrope pointed out that he has had a long standing request that the School Committee discuss/review the Ottoson activity day and choices offered. Without the review Mr. Thrope reported that he could not support the motion. Ms. LaMachia stated that the full committee upon receipt of the schedule of events would discuss the events for that day

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Schlichtman

Voted to approve a field-trip request for Ottoson students to Loon Mountain in February as part of Ottoson Activity Day. 6-1 Mr. Thrope abstained citing the above reason.

Mrs. Donovan brought another trip before the Committee for review. The Superintendent explained that this was a planned overseas trip during April school vacation. The field trip was planned on private time and the teacher has been made aware that we are not really approving overseas trips. It is a private group from the town, many students attend AHS (20 out of the 22 students). The teacher feels that it is not a school field trip because there has been no discussion, contact, or monies collected at school.. Money has already been collected from participants and the tour group is not willing to return the money. Mrs. Donovan called the schools' attorney requesting advice on how to remove any relationship with the school. Mr. Miller stated that he would create a letter that would require the signature of the teacher along

with the Superintendent negating any relationship or responsibility from Arlington Public Schools to this trip and send it to every person on that trip.

There was discussion and general agreement that the School Committee cannot dictate to parents or teachers what they can do in their private time as long as they are not using the school's facilities in any way for recruitment.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Thrope it was

Voted to endorse Supt. Donovan's recommendation that a legal document be drawn and signed by the Superintendent and the field trip sponsor absolving the APS of any liability. Unanimous.

**December Meeting**

Mr. Sullivan informed the Committee that he would be out of Town for the of December 11th School Committee meeting and he would like to reschedule to December 19th if it meets with the Committees' approval.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Ms. Goodman it was

Voted to reschedule the regular school committee meeting of December 11, 2001 to Wednesday December 19, 2001 at 7:30 PM. Unanimous.

Ms. Goodman requested that the School Committee discuss holding school committee meetings outside of AHS.

Mr. McKenna noted that the Specialized Student Services Subcommittee would meet on Thursday December 20th at 5:30 PM, with the Peirce field house the only item on the agenda.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. McKenna it was voted to enter executive session for the purpose of a legal issue and negotiations with no further business to be conducted except to adjourn upon the return to open session. Roll Call: Unanimous.

Executive Session 10:45 to 11:20 PM

Submitted by  
Karen Tassone  
Committee Secretary